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U.S. EPA and the San Francisco Bay Water Board order the Sausalito-Marín City sanitary district to comply with the Clean Water Act

SAN FRANCISCO – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency today announced it has ordered the Sausalito-Marín City Sanitary District to comply with the Clean Water Act at its wastewater treatment plant in Sausalito, Calif.

The San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board also issued a complaint assessing the district a \$204,000 fine. Both actions were taken on May 31.

Over the last three years, the wastewater treatment plant, located at 1 Fort Baker Road, has experienced chronic violations of the effluent limitations for its discharge to San Francisco Bay. The treatment plant serves the communities of Sausalito, Marin City, Tam Valley and the National Park Service at Fort Baker.

“For the protection of San Francisco Bay’s water quality, it is imperative that the Sausalito-Marín City Sanitary District comply with its permit limits,” said Alexis Strauss, water division director for the U. S. EPA’s Pacific Southwest Region. “The U. S. EPA’s order requires the district to upgrade its treatment plant and promptly comply with its discharge permit.”

Since March 2004, the district has had dozens of violations of its wastewater discharge permit. Many of these violations are due to the district’s plant lacking treatment units that are common at other wastewater treatment facilities. Of these violations, 68 are subject to a fine mandated by the California Water Code, which is the basis for the San Francisco Bay Water Board’s complaint assessing the \$204,000 fine.

“We view these violations as significant and are required by law to fine the district,” said Bruce Wolfe, executive officer of the San Francisco Bay Water Board. “More importantly, we need the district to work with us and U. S. EPA to ensure that the cause of these violations is addressed and the bay is protected.”

The U. S. EPA's order is based on an audit of the Sausalito-Marín City Sanitary District's records and an inspection of the facility in March 2007. It requires the sanitary district to make improvements to its wastewater treatment plant and comply with its discharge permit by December 31, 2007.

For more information on the EPA's National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permits program, please visit: <http://www.epa.gov/region09/water/npdes/index.html>

For more information on the San Francisco Bay Water Board, please visit:
<http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb2/>

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